

STUDIES ON Mikania (COMPOSITAE)-IX

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Continued study of Mikania has resulted in the following comments on Mikania swartziana Griseb. and the description of one new species. The present paper is preliminary to a general treatment of the genus for the West Indies.

MIKANIA SWARTZIANA Griseb , Fl. Brit. W. Ind. 363. 1861.

This is the first described Mikania from the West Indies belonging to a closely related group of slender twiners possessing thinly pedicelled racemose capitulescences. The plant was originally cited as occurring in Jamaica and Cuba, but the Cuban plants are currently referred to under the later names M. alba Taylor, M. hioramii B.L. Robins., and M. lindenii Moore. It has also been reported in Haiti by Moscoso (1943), but this seems to be based on inaccurate determination. It appears that M. swartziana is a very rare plant that is endemic to Jamaica.

It has become apparent that the original diagnosis describes not only the Jamaican plant, but certain Mikania elements from Cuba. This is supported by the mention of this plant in Cuba by Grisebach (1861), thereby implying a specimen from there was utilized in preparing the original description. The matter is further complicated in that the type specimen of M. swartziana is composed of four separate fragments belonging to two different species, both from Jamaica. The essence, then, is that two or possibly three different species were utilized in preparing the description of M. swartziana. The description is unnecessarily broad and describes any of the previously mentioned species. It is therefore necessary to define the morphological limits of M. swartziana to reflect its correct status. This can only be accomplished by determining which of the two elements that compose the type more nearly matches the original description.

The largest fragment of the type (element A) is on the left side of the sheet and consists of a stem about 25 cm long, three poorly pressed leaves, and a capitulescence. The leaves are ovate, 5-nervate, and darkened on drying. The capitulescence is composed of rather dense racemes with the heads borne close together. The exterior bracts are as long or slightly longer than the pedicel. The corolla is funnelform while the achene is densely glandular. The remaining three fragments (element B) are the two fragments on the right side and one on the upper center of the sheet. They are all the same and consist of primarily capitulescences with a few

bracteal leaves. The heads are more distantly spaced on the rachis of the capitulescence. The exterior bracts are much shorter than the pedicels. Corollas are tubular and the achene glabrous. The leaves are elliptic-oblong, 3-nervate, and have not darkened on drying.

It is my judgment that the salient characters of the original description correspond more closely with element B. This is seen in the trinervate leaves, the heads being more distantly spaced, the clavate (more tubular) corolla, and the glabrous achenes. Therefore, the portions of the type specimen identified as element B in this paper are designated as the lectotype of M. swartziana. Additionally, this choice will better preserve current usage that describes M. swartziana as having trinervate leaves (Adams 1972 and Urban 1907).

Lectotype: Jamaica, Swartz s.n. (S).

Additional specimen examined: Jamaica, Wright s.n. (BM).

The original choice of the type was unfortunate since three other specimens, apparently part of the same collection (therefore isotypes), are housed at Stockholm. The type appears to have been selected because it had more material on the sheet. Two of the other specimens possess cauline leaves and capitulescences of what is now M. swartziana and either would have constituted a homogenous type. The third specimen of this collection is essentially identical with element A, other than having two extraneous leaves of M. swartziana attached to the sheet, but not connected to the major portion of the specimen. This specimen can now be described as follows:

MIKANIA TENELLA W. Holmes, sp. nov.

Suffrutex volubilis; foliis ovatis, 4-7.5 cm longis et 3-5 cm latis, apice caudatis breviter, basi rotundis, marginibus integris; racemis ca. 10 cm longis et 10 cm latis; capitulis ca. 3 mm longis; corollis 1.7-1.8 mm longis; dentibus limbi triangulatis, ca. 0.3 mm longis; achaenis ca. 1 mm longis; pappi setis 27-33, ca. 2 mm longis; scabridis.

Twining vine; stems terete, striate, glabrous; internodes 8-9 cm long. Leaf blades ovate, 4-7.5 cm long, 3-5 cm wide, apices narrowed to short caudate tips, margins entire, bases rounded, upper surfaces glabrous, the nerves and veins obscure, lower surfaces glabrous, 5-nervate with a pair of nerves originating very near the base, a second more prominent pair separating ca. 1 cm above the first, tertiary veinlets forming a somewhat obscure reticulate-areolate pattern below; petioles flexuous, 8-10 mm long, glabrous. Capitulescence a compound raceme, ca. 10 cm high and 10 cm in diameter, the head bearing regions of the branchlets ca. 1.5 cm long, the heads 1.5-2 mm apart; lower bracts similar to cauline

leaves, much reduced upwards, lanceolate, ca 5 mm long, branchlets angular, glabrous; pedicels 0.8-1 mm long, glabrous. Heads ca 3 mm long; exterior bracts subulate, ca 1 mm long, glabrous, borne at the base of the pedicel. Phyllaries elliptic-ovate, ca 2 mm long, glabrous, apices rounded, obscurely puberulent. Corolla ca 1.7-1.8 mm long, tube ca 0.75 mm long, throat funnelform, ca 0.75 mm long, teeth triangular, ca 0.3 mm long, sparingly glandular. Achenes (immature) ca 1 mm long, densely glandular. Pappus bristles white, ca 2 mm long, scabrid, gradually thinning from base to apex (Fig 1).

TYPE: Jamaica, Swartz s.n (S).

Mikania tenella is one of two species of the West Indies having a racemose capitulescence with the exterior bracts being longer in length than the pedicel. The other is the Cuban *M. alba* Taylor. That species differs in possessing thicker, prominently 3-nervate, lance-ovate leaves with the margins often being coarsely dentate. Opposite petioles are connected by a thickened stipule-like enation, a trait absent in *M. tenella*. The racemose capitulescence of *M. alba* has slightly larger heads that are more remotely spaced on the branchlets. The plant does not darken upon drying as does *M. tenella*.

LITERATURE CITED

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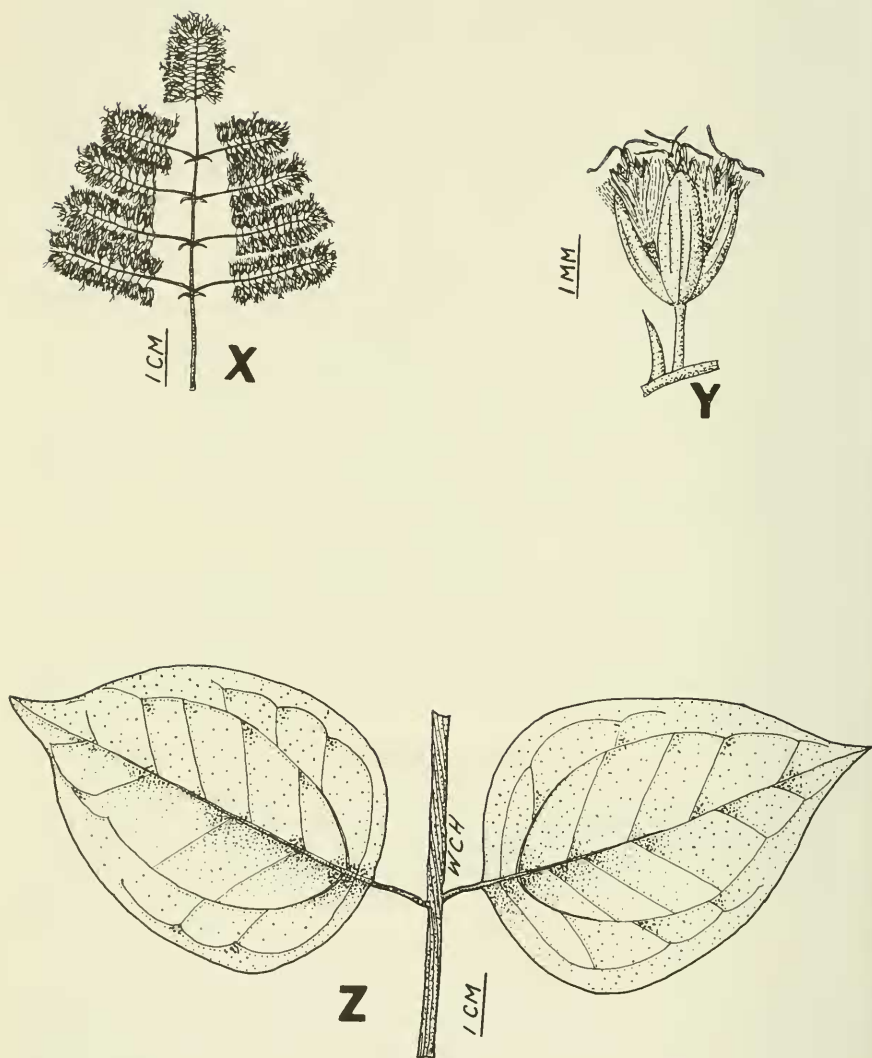


Fig. 1. Mikania tenella W. Holmes. X. Capitulescence. Y. Head with exterior bract. Z. Leaves and stem.